

Good morning, it's December 6, 2012, and welcome to Panther News. I'm _____, _____th grade.

Thank you!

December 21 is just 15 days away, and as we mentioned on our last broadcast, “Don’t worry!”

According to NASA scientists, the world will not end. Earth has been getting along just fine for more than 4 billion years, and knowledgeable scientists worldwide know of no threat associated with 2012.

The Mayan calendar does not end in December. Just as the calendar you have on your kitchen wall does not end after December 31, the Mayan calendar does not end on December 21, 2012. This date is the end of the Mayan long-count period but then ... just as your calendar begins again on January 1 ... another long-count period begins for the Mayan calendar.

Good morning, I'm _____, _____th grade.

Even after December 21, it has been predicted that there will be a total blackout of Earth December 23 through 25 ... absolutely not! The false reports on this issue claim that some sort of "alignment of the Universe" will cause a blackout. There is no such alignment.

A planet alignment will impact Earth. There are no planetary alignments in the next few decades ... a decade is 10 years ... and even if these alignments were to occur, their effects on Earth would be negligible, or so small as to be meaningless.

There is a planet or brown dwarf called Nibiru or Planet X or Eris that is approaching Earth and threatening our planet with widespread destruction. This is an Internet hoax or joke. If it existed, astronomers would have been tracking it for at least the past 10 years, and it would be visible by now to the naked eye.

Good morning, I'm _____, _____th grade.

It is believed that a polar shift will happen and destroy Earth. A reversal in Earth's rotation is impossible. Many disaster websites fool people. A magnetic reversal doesn't cause any harm to life on Earth, and scientists believe a magnetic reversal is very unlikely to happen in the next few thousand years.

Earth is in danger of being hit by an asteroid in 2012. The last big impact was 65 million years ago, and that led to the extinction of the dinosaurs. NASA has a "Spaceguard Survey" to find any large near-Earth asteroids long before they hit. There are no threatening asteroids as large as the one that killed the dinosaurs.

Earth is in danger from a giant solar storm in 2012. Solar activity has a regular cycle, and there's no special risk this year. The 2012-2014 time frame is predicted to be an average solar cycle, no different than previous cycles throughout history.

Good morning, I'm _____, _____th grade.

The NASA scientists ask, "Where's the Science? Where's the evidence?" They say, "There's no evidence to support unusual events taking place in December, 2012."

So, let us know what you think. December 21 is just 15 days away! Send us your comment to:

panthernewsreport@panthernewsreport.com

and we will broadcast what you have to say.

We have a winner for the movie pass ... Maribel Andrade, 8th grade. She answered the question correctly, "Who was the person who signed all four founding documents of our country?" He was Roger Sherman, a delegate from Connecticut who helped write the "Bill of Rights". Thomas Jefferson described him as "a man who never said a foolish thing in his life".

Good morning, I'm _____, _____th grade.

Christmas is near ... so, let's take a look at another side of this holiday ... Santa Claus.

The legend of Santa Claus can be traced back hundreds of years to a monk named Saint Nicholas. It is believed that he was born sometime around 280 A.D. in modern-day Turkey. He was admired for his kindness. Saint Nicholas became the subject of many legends. It is said that he gave away all of his inherited wealth and traveled the countryside helping the poor and sick. His feast day is celebrated on the anniversary of his death, December 6.

Over many years, his popularity spread, and he became known as the protector of children and sailors. By the Renaissance, Saint Nicholas was the most popular saint in Europe. He maintained a positive reputation, especially in Holland.

Good morning, I'm _____, _____th grade.

Saint Nicholas came into the American popular culture towards the end of the 18th century. In December 1773, and again in 1774, a New York newspaper reported that groups of Dutch families had gathered to honor the anniversary of his death.

The name Santa Claus evolved from the Dutch nickname, Sinter Klaas. In 1809, Washington Irving helped to popularize the Sinter Klaas stories when he referred to Saint Nicholas as the patron saint of New York in his book, "The History of New York".

Stores began to advertise Christmas shopping in 1820, and by the 1840s, newspapers were creating separate sections for holiday advertisements, which often featured images of the newly-popular Santa Claus.

Good morning, I'm _____, _____th grade.

In 1822, Clement Clarke Moore wrote a long Christmas poem for his three daughters entitled "An Account of a Visit from Saint Nicholas." Moore's poem is responsible for our modern image of Santa Claus ... the "jolly old elf" and the ability to climb down a chimney.

His poem helped popularize the now-familiar image of a Santa Claus who flies from house to house on Christmas Eve in a sleigh led by eight flying reindeer leaving presents for children.

In 1881, political cartoonist Thomas Nast created the first likeness that matches our modern image of Santa Claus. His cartoon in "Harper's Weekly" showed Santa as a big and round, cheerful man with a full, white beard, holding a sack with toys for children. He gave Santa his bright red suit trimmed with white fur, North Pole workshop, elves, and his wife, Mrs. Claus.

In the early 1890s, the Salvation Army needed money to pay for the free Christmas meals they provided to needy families. They began dressing up unemployed men in Santa Claus suits and sending them into the streets of New York to ask for money. During the Christmas season, we still see these Salvation Army Santas at stores like Walmart.

Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer was created by Robert L. May, a writer at the Montgomery Ward department store. In 1939, he wrote a Christmas-themed story-poem to help bring customers into his store.

He told the story of Rudolph, a young reindeer who was teased by the other deer because of his large, glowing, red nose.

We want to mention again that the “Best Christmas Ever” event will take place here at TCCC-RYSS on December 8, this Saturday. The event gives children at our school and surrounding schools the opportunity to experience the joy of the holidays.

This year’s event will be the largest since its beginning 20 years ago with a goal of providing over 200 boys and girls Christmas gifts and clothes. There will also be a traditional holiday lunch and presents handed out by Santa and his helpers.

Teachers and staff, please make this “Best Christmas Ever” truly the best by participating. Please consider becoming an official sponsor, in-kind contributor, or volunteer for this event.

Contact Mr. Villarreal.

“Communities in Schools” is very active on our campus. To give you an idea of what will be happening:

Today: Reading Tutoring. “Career Counselors” as a part of College Readiness. Homework Assistance. Soccer, Volleyball, Xbox, Wii and Board Games.

Friday: “Time Management Skills” as a part of Career Awareness. Homework Assistance. Soccer Scrimmage. Xbox, Wii.

Some quick announcements:

The date for the collection of canned goods and non-perishable items is December 14. The Youth Advisory Group is also asking that students donate blankets, if possible, along with the other items.

Please make sure that you are following the uniform code in your student handbook. Wear your ID badge at all times while on campus. Respect each other as you pass by in the hallways. Stay to your right, and NO BULLYING, please!

Please don't enter the school buildings and walk around the hallways before 7:55am, and don't walk in with open drinks like coffee, hot chocolate and sodas.

If you see trash in the hallways of our buildings and anywhere on our campus, pick it up, and throw it in a garbage can.

A pair of glasses were found outside on the ground. If these are yours, please go to room 331 to pick them up.

Teachers please submit your students' writing to Mr. Chambers so we can then contact those students for our broadcasts. We would like for them to have an opportunity to "go live" ... read their compositions ... on PANTHER NEWS ... a great experience!

Again, our new e-mail address so you can send your comments and submissions to PANTHER NEWS for broadcast consideration:

panthernewsreport@panthernewsreport.com

That's all for now. We'll see you next Monday. Have a great day, and study hard! Your future depends on it!